Claim Amendments

Please make the following amendments to the claims:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A tire storage system, comprising:

a spacer to be placed in an opening of a tire, the opening being a cavity to dispose a rim of the tire, the rim being absent from the opening, the tire having a bead of a predetermined circumference and a hollow inside, the spacer comprising:

a top portion having a circumference greater than the predetermined circumference;

a cylindrical body having a center; and

a connecting rod disposed orthogonally through the center of the body, the connecting rod further comprising a first tip and a second tip, wherein the first tip engages securely with the head portion of the first tire cap and the second tip engages securely with the head portion of the second tire cap when the first tire cap and the second tire cap are affixed to the spacer; and

two identical tire caps, a first tire cap and a second tire cap, the tire caps each comprising a head portion and a base portion, wherein the head portion of the first tire cap fits through the opening and the base portion of the second tire cap is disposed atop the tire, the head portion further comprising a chamber having a first opening and a second opening, wherein the first tip threads through the second opening of the chamber of the first tire cap and the second tip threads through the

first opening of the chamber of the second tire cap when the first tire cap and the second tire cap are affixed to the spacer;
wherein the spacer and the head portion of the first tire cap substantially fill the opening of the tire.

2. (CANCELLED) The tire storage system of claim 1, wherein the connecting rod further comprises a first tip and a second tip, wherein the first tip engages securely with the head portion of the first tire cap and the second tip engages securely with the head portion of the second tire cap when the first tire cap and the second tire cap are affixed to the spacer.

3. (CANCELLED) The tire storage system of claim 2, wherein the head portion of each tire cap further comprises a chamber having a first opening and a second opening, wherein the first tip threads through the second opening of the chamber of the first tire cap and the second tip threads through the first opening of the chamber of the second tire cap when the first tire cap and the second tire cap are affixed to the spacer.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The tire storage system of claim [3] 1, the first opening and second opening further comprising shafts for preventing the tips from being disengaged from the chambers.

5. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 1, wherein the spacer and tire caps are formed from an elastomeric compound.

6. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 5, wherein the elastomeric compound includes a fire-retardant material.

7. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 5, wherein the spacer and the tire caps are treated with a fire-retardant material after formation.

8. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 1, wherein the first tire cap is stackable atop a second tire storage system.

9. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 1, wherein a second tire storage system can be stacked atop the second tire cap.

10. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 1, wherein the first tire cap is stackable atop the second tire cap prior to being engaged with the spacer, and the second tire cap is stackable atop the first tire cap prior to being engaged with the spacer.

11. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 1, wherein the base portion of each tire cap has gently sloping, flexible sides, wherein the sides slightly flatten when the tire is disposed atop the tire cap.

12. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 1, wherein the top portion of the spacer is disposed over the bead of the tire when the tire storage system is fully engaged.

13. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 1, wherein the size of the spacer is tailored to the size of the opening of the tire.

14. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 13, further comprising a second spacer, wherein the second spacer is larger than the first spacer.

15. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 14, wherein the second spacer is a different color from the first spacer.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The tire storage system of claim [3] 1, wherein the head portion is cross-shaped, when viewed from overhead.

17. (ORIGINAL) The tire storage system of claim 1, wherein mosquitoes are prevented from breeding inside the tire.

18. (PREVIOUSLY AMENDED) The tire storage system of claim 11, wherein the flattening of the sides of the base portion against the tire seals the tire against the base portion.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The tire storage system of claim [3] 1, wherein the tips may be severed for emergency disengagement of the tire storage system.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The tire storage system of claim [3] 1, wherein the tips are conical in shape.